SCROOGED UP!

A Holiday Comedy in One Act

by
Dan Roberts

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DEDICATION

To all of those companies who keep struggling against sometimes insurmountable odds to keep the tradition of quality theater alive. *The Playwright,*
Dan Roberts

STORY OF THE PLAY

The Hillsdale Community Theater wants to produce “A Christmas Carol,” but they don’t have enough actors to play the extraordinarily large number of parts. So their undaunted director, being resourceful (if not totally realistic), has triple and quadruple-cast the roles. And since everyone in sight has been recruited, the cast also fills in as costumers, stagehands and technicians. The impossibility of this situation brings tensions to a comical head as the final rehearsal invites one calamity after another. “Scrooged Up!” provides a dickens of a time for everyone!

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

The premiere of "Scrooged Up!" was presented under the direction of the playwright Dan Roberts by the Academy of Performing Arts Repertory Troupe at the Academy Theater on December 18, 2006, in Grandview, Missouri.

Original Cast of "Scrooged Up!"
Claude: Dan Roberts; Evelyn: Wendy Swearingin; Frank: V’ion Mitchell; Larry: Kenneth Roller; Lester: Chris Scott; Phyllis: Angela Livingston; Marge: Elizabeth Golden; Bert: Tony Livingston; Mable: Hayley Nelson; Wilma: Cynthia Livingston; Ben: Luke Swearingin.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 5 w, 1 flexible, 1 child)

CLAUDE (CLAUDIA): The director.

EVELYN: Actress who serves as the narrator.

FRANK: Actor who portrays Ebenezer Scrooge.

LARRY: Stage Manager and Ben's father. He portrays Bob Cratchit.

LESTER: Portrays Fred, Cratchit Boy, and Rag Seller.

PHYLLIS: Actress who portrays Charity Lady 1 and Maid.

MARGE: Actress who portrays Charity Lady 2, Ghost of Christmas Past, Martha, and Ghost of Christmas Future.

BERT: Actor who portrays Marley's Ghost and Ghost of Christmas Present.

MABLE: Actress portrays Cratchit Girl and Fred's Wife.

WILMA: President of the theatre association who portrays Mrs. Cratchit and Merchant 1.

BEN: Small child who portrays Tiny Tim.

PERFORMANCE TIME: About 25 minutes.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1: Scrooge's Counting House
Scene 2: Scrooge's Bedchamber
Scene 3: The Cratchit Home
Scene 4: The Streets of London and a Churchyard
Scene 5: The Cratchit Home

SETTINGS

For the set there are four units against curtained backdrop.

Sc 1: The Counting House: Desks with chairs are SL and SR. A wood burning stove is UC. A trash basket is left of the SR desk. A coat tree is UR.

Sc. 2: Scrooge's bedchamber: A four-poster bed is SR, with a chair on the left. There is room to walk US of both the bed and the chair. A table and chair are SR. A bowl, spoon and cup are on the table.

Sc. 3: The Cratchit home: A simple dining table and chairs. Tiny Tim's stool is UC. The table is set.

Sc. 4: The streets of London/Churchyard: A bench UR and a streetlamp DL. The streetlamp needs to be placed first. For the churchyard, a tombstone which catches "fire."

Sc. 5: The Cratchit home as before, except the table now displays a large turkey and more bountiful food.

PROPS

Large book for Evelyn
Quill pen and papers on Scrooge's desk
Small cooked "goose" on platter and a few food dishes
Large cooked "turkey" on platter and dishes of heaping food
Script for Phyllis
Damaged phone receiver for Evelyn
Bag containing men's and women's underwear for Phyllis
Fire extinguisher for Larry

Scene 1: Scrooge's Counting House

(AT RISE: EVELYN, as narrator, stands at center. FRANK, as Scrooge, is working at his desk. If MUSIC is desired, play "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" and fade under monologue.)

EVELYN: *(Reading from a large book.)* Jacob Marley was dead. Seven years dead on that Christmas Eve. Ebenezer Scrooge never painted out old Marley's name on their sign. There it stood, years afterward, above the warehouse door: "Scrooge and Marley, Counting House." Scrooge was tight-fisted: a squeezing, grasping, covetous old sinner. Heat and cold had little effect on him. No wind blew that was bitterer than he. Nobody ever greeted him on the streets, but what did he care? It was the very thing he liked: to edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance.

(LARRY, as Cratchit, enters SL and removes his coat and hat. He holds them in his hand as he starts to wander the set.)

EVELYN: *(Continued.)* Now on the best of all the good days of the year, on Christmas Eve, old Scrooge sat busy in his counting house. It was cold, bike, bleating weather.
CLAUDE: *(From a front row seat.)* "Bleak, biting."
EVELYN: *(Looking toward him.)* What, dear?
CLAUDE: "Bleak, biting." You said, "bike, bleating."
EVELYN: No, I didn't.
CLAUDE: Yes, you did.
EVELYN: No, I didn't.
CLAUDE: It doesn't matter. Take the line again, please, Evelyn.
EVELYN: Now on the best of all the good days of the year, on Christmas Eve, old Scrooge sat busy in his counting house. It was cold, blike, beating weather.
FRANK: She said, "blike, beating."
EVELYN: No, I didn't.
FRANK: "Blike, beating." That's what you said.
EVELYN: I did not.

(LARRY is now SR, retrieving the coat tree and starting to carry it to SL.)

CLAUDE: Never mind! Larry! What are you doing with the coat tree?!
LARRY: It's supposed to be stage left, Claude. It's always been stage left.
CLAUDE: But you don't place it during the scene! Throw your coat over the chair or something!
LARRY: It's always been stage left, Claude. Why was it over thar?
PHYLLIS: *(Entering SL.)* It's my fault, Claude. I found it backstage and put it there.
CLAUDE: See, Larry? You're supposed to place your own props, and you didn't do it. Phyllis had to do it for you.
LARRY: I'm sorry, Phyllis.
PHYLLIS: No problem, Larry. *(Exits.)*
LARRY: *(To PHYLLIS.)* It's jest that … *(To CLAUDE, who periodically attempts to respond ad lib.)* It's jest that I git confused havin' t'be stage manager and play two parts to boot. Heck, I git confused jest bein' stage manager. Now I gotta be Bob Cratchit, and then thet merchant feller, an' I gotta 'member whar the coat tree goes, an' t'morrow there's gonna be people out here, Claude! There's gonna be people. An' they're gonna know I forgot the danged coat tree, 'cause I'll be standin' thar with m'coat in one hand an' m'hat in t'other, an' I won't 'member whacha said 'bout throwin' it on the chair, 'cause all I'll be thinkin' 'bout is whar is the danged coat tree!
CLAUDE: *(Finally spotting an opening, stands.)* I'll place the coat tree! It'll be there, okay?
LARRY: It's jest that I gotta be Bob Cratchit ….
CLAUDE: I know, Larry. Let's try to get past this, okay?
LARRY: Okay, Claude.
CLAUDE: Okay. Sit. *(LARRY does.)* Evelyn, take it from, "Just then, Scrooge's nephew …." *(Returns to his seat.)*
EVELYN: Just then, Scrooge's nephew, Fred, strode into the shop.

End of Freeview

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